



New Member Orientation Packet

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Happy Tails Pet Therapy! The need in our community is great and we are excited to welcome new members with their dogs, cats, or rabbits.

Happy Tails volunteers share the unconditional love of their pets with people of all ages with physical, emotional, and cognitive needs. We provide trained and experienced volunteers for pet assisted activity and therapy at different types of facilities throughout the metro Atlanta area including assisted living communities, adult and children's hospitals, psychiatric units, schools, and rehabilitation facilities.

In order to ensure a quality experience for volunteers and for our clients, our selection and training program is thorough. Please use this packet to guide you through the application process, including:

- Application steps, checklist and fees (pages 2 & 3)
 - Volunteer and pet profile must be completed online
 - Veterinarian form may be completed online or emailed
 - Visit happytailspets.org to pay application and due fees
- Release of Claims (page 5)
- Code of Conduct (Page 6)
- Dogs: Vet Health Form and Health requirements (Pages 8 - 10)
- Cats: Vet Health Form and Health requirements (Pages 11 - 13)
- Pet-Handler evaluation overview (page 15)

We appreciate your interest and look forward to welcoming you to a unique volunteer experience to share with your pet. If you have any questions or need additional information please email admin@happytailspets.org.



Application Checklist

After attending the Happy Tails Pet Therapy Orientation, please use the following guide for your next steps on becoming a member.

Basic Requirements

Membership is open to pet owners with dogs, cats and/or rabbits. Applicants are required to complete and meet the following requirements prior to application:

- The potential member must be at least 18 years old.
- Pet must be at least 12 months old for dogs and 6 months old for rabbits and cats.
- Pet must have lived with the potential member for at least 6 months.
- Dogs have completed basic obedience training in a group class with the potential member with a certificate of completion.

Step 1: Submit application and required documents to admin@happytailspets.org

- Pay a \$20 application fee to cover expenses of processing. Payment can be made on our website at happytailspets.org via [Paypal](#) or Zelle.
- Review, sign and agree to uphold the Happy Tails Code of Conduct.
- Review and sign the release of claims for Accidental Injury document.
- Complete the Volunteer Profile. Each volunteer and/or family member wishing to be tested with their pet must complete their individual volunteer profile.
- Complete the Pet Profile - one per pet.
- Complete the Veterinary Health record, including signature of licensed veterinarian – one per animal. Please review the form for completeness before submitting.
- Certificate of completion for a 6 session group obedience class. One per person for each pet. Obedience certificate must have the name of the handler and the pet. No other forms accepted.

Step 2: Pet-Handler Evaluation

- After step 1 above has been completed, schedule your Pet-Handler evaluation by contacting our administrative office at admin@happytailspets.org.
- Attend Pet-Handler Evaluation.

If you pass, move on to step 3. If you do not pass, you will be counseled at the testing on what you and your pet need to work on before you return. Do not be discouraged if you do not pass the first time. Failure to pass the first time does not necessarily mean you and your pet cannot join at a future date. Sometimes additional age or training are all that are needed.



Step 3: Volunteer Training

- Once you pass the Pet-Handler Evaluation, visit our website to schedule your Volunteer Training. This 2 hour in-person session covers the role and responsibilities of volunteers, types of client facilities to help you select the right visit for your pet and review procedures and policies regarding visit safety. **At the completion of the training session, you will receive your Happy Tails new member kit which includes your t-shirt, pet bandana, pet ID tag and member ID badge.*

Step 4: Observation Visit & Membership Fee

- After completing your volunteer training, select an observation visit(s) from the list provided and contact the team leader to schedule. It is best practice to attend at least one observation visit, without your pet, to learn how a team and visit functions.
- Submit completed observation form to admin@happytailspets.org
- Pay a membership fee of \$50 for an individual or \$75 for family. Payment can be made on our website happytailspets.org via [Paypal](#) or Zelle. This helps to cover the cost of your Happy Tails ID badge, pet tag, pet bandana, t-shirt, insurance coverage, website maintenance, newsletters and other expenses.

Congratulations on becoming a Happy Tails Pet Therapy Member!

You are encouraged to visit a number of different facilities to learn what type of visit is better for you and your pet.

After your initial application, annual membership renewal includes dues of \$50 for individuals or \$75 for families and is due in September for all members. Volunteers who become members in the two months (July and August) prior to dues assessment will be included in the new membership year. Happy Tails is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and both the application fee and annual dues are tax deductible. Additional donations are welcome, as the membership fee only covers 20% of our operating expenses.



New Member Application & Signed Documents



Release of Claims for Accidental Injury

I understand that Happy Tails members and their pets participate in a variety of activities including, but not limited to, regularly scheduled and special visits, public appearances, and social events. Members, non-members, and other pets are typically present during these activities. I understand that there are dangers inherent in these activities and acknowledge the importance of following safety rules and good practices during these activities.

I also understand that, as an applicant for membership in Happy Tails, I am solely responsible for my safety and that of my pet during the Happy Tails pet evaluation process and any other activities I, or my pet, may participate in prior to completion of the Happy Tails membership process. I release and indemnify Happy Tails, its officers, directors, members, agents, and employees from liability for any damage, injury, illness, or death that may occur to me or my pet while we are participating in Happy Tails application and membership activities.

Happy Tails provides members with insurance which protects the Member and Happy Tails in the event of an incident during a visit. This insurance also provides secondary medical benefits to the member in case of injury while on an official Happy Tails visit, and traveling to and from the visit. No medical benefits are provided to my pet.

I further understand that although Happy Tails provides training, manuals, a code of conduct, and program policies directed at maintaining visit safety, the organization cannot guarantee my safety or the safety of my pet. Therefore, as a condition of membership in Happy Tails, I accept responsibility for my own safety and the safety of my pet while participating in Happy Tails member activities. I release and indemnify Happy Tails, its officers, directors, members, agents, and employees from liability for any damage, injury, illness or death that may occur to me or my pet while we are participating in such activities.

I certify that I am 18 years old or older. I have read this Release in its entirety, understand it, and agree to be legally bound by it.

Applicant/Member Signature

Applicant/Member Name (Printed)

Date



Happy Tails Pet Therapy, Inc. Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct of Happy Tails Pet Therapy, Inc. (“Happy Tails”) outlines roles, responsibilities, commitments and boundaries for Happy Tails members to ensure safe and successful visits for our members, their pets and our client facilities as well as the orderly functioning of the Happy Tails organization.

- I agree to meet all requirements set forth by Happy Tails prior to participating in any visit, event, or other activity.
- I am responsible for withdrawing my animal from Happy Tails, either temporarily or permanently, if I feel it cannot perform up to the standards of Happy Tails.
- I am responsible for making sure that my pet is clean, well groomed, and healthy, as this reflects positively on the organization.
- I agree to maintain and update my animal’s veterinary health records as defined by current Happy Tails requirements.
- I have read the Happy Tails Policies and agree to abide by them. I understand that it is my responsibility to become familiar with any changes to the Policies and otherwise to periodically review the Policies as needed.
- I have read the Happy Tails Raw Protein Diet Policy, understand its importance and agree to abide by and adhere to the policy. I certify that neither my Happy Tails pet nor any other pet in my household is currently fed, and for at least the past two months has not been fed a raw protein diet.
- I understand that I am expected to conduct myself in a professional manner and to make sure that my animal is under control at all times.
- I acknowledge the importance of my commitment to be on time and to find a substitute if I cannot make my scheduled visit.
- I agree to dress in a manner that is tasteful and otherwise un-provocative.
- I agree to refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages (other than at social events) and/or illegal substances and refrain from the use of profane or abusive language before and during Happy Tails visits and functions, and not engage in behavior or conduct injurious to the reputation of the organization as defined in the volunteer training manual.
- I will not take a photograph or video of any client at a Happy Tails visit or event without permission of the client and facility. In facilities where photography is permitted, individuals or their legal representatives must sign photography release forms in order for any photos to be used by Happy Tails or its members in either personal or Happy Tails related media (newsletter, video, brochures, website and social media). The facility release applies only to individuals identified on the release form. Happy Tails must be mentioned in the photograph caption; however the name(s) of any non- Happy Tails individual(s) may not be used. Executed



photography release forms with a copy of the photograph must be submitted to the administrator as instructed on the photo release form.

- I will recognize and respect the rights of the individuals and the rules of the facilities visited.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that any potential incident, as defined in the Happy Tails Policies, of which I am aware is properly reported, whether by me, my Team Leader or another Happy Tails member.
- I agree to respect the authority, follow the direction, and abide by the decisions of the Team Leader, Special Event Chairperson, or other Happy Tails representative with responsibility for each Happy Tails visit, event or other activity.
- I will be respectful, courteous and considerate of my fellow Happy Tails members, staff members and volunteers, in person and online. The activities outlined below are strictly prohibited.
 - Abusive language towards a Happy Tails member, staff member, volunteer, or another participant.
 - Discourtesy or rudeness to a fellow Happy Tails member, staff member, or volunteer.
 - Verbal, physical or visual harassment of a fellow Happy Tails member, staff member, or volunteer.
 - Actual or threatened violence toward any individual or group.
 - Conduct endangering the life, safety, health, or well-being of others.
 - Bullying or taking unfair advantage of any Happy Tails member, staff member or volunteer.

Any member who violates this Code of Conduct may be subject to discipline, up to and including removal from the organization. I understand that my participation in Happy Tails and/or any of its programs is a privilege, not a right, and is subject to the observance of the organization's rules, policies and procedures.

I understand and will abide by the Code of Conduct as part of continuing membership in Happy Tails.

Applicant/Member Signature

Applicant/Member Name (Printed)

Date



Vet Health Form - Dogs

Owner Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Pet Information

Pet Name: _____

Breed(s): _____

Color(s): _____

Age: _____ Weight: _____

Sex: Male Female Altered: Yes No

Annual Requirements

Bordetella Vaccination Date: _____ Result _____

Fecal Exam Date: _____ Result _____

Rabies Requirement (Select one)

3 Year Vaccination OR Annual Vaccination

Date of last vaccination: _____

Core Vaccine Requirements (Select one)

Annual antibody titers for Parvovirus and Distemper with adequate results. (submit a copy of lab results for each)

Date of titer: _____

Results: Adequate Inadequate

- OR -

The following 4 vaccinations at least every 3 years:

Parvovirus Date: _____

Distemper Date: _____

Adenovirus2/Hepatitis Date: _____

Parainfluenza Date: _____

Notes on Temperament

Does this pet have the temperament and health to be a good candidate for animal-assisted therapy? Yes No

Veterinarian Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Practice Name & Address: _____

Veterinarian Signature: _____ Date: _____



Health Requirements for Dogs

The following are requirements recommended by the Happy Tails Veterinary Advisory Board and approved by the Happy Tails Board of Directors. These requirements offer preventive healthcare options for your dog, while continuing to protect our clients and other Happy Tails pets.

At the time of the annual exam, your veterinarian is asked to complete and sign the Happy Tails Veterinary Health Record. Receipts are not acceptable in lieu of the signed health form. Members are encouraged to keep a copy of the health form and laboratory tests from your veterinarian as an important cross check and reference.

Annual Examination

An annual exam is an important component of a comprehensive, individualized health care program for your dog.

Vaccinations and Tests

Vaccination needs are based on the age, breed, health status, environment (potential exposure to harmful agents), lifestyle (contact with other animals), travel habits of your dog and vaccine reactions it may have experienced in the past.⁴ For many years, a set of annual vaccinations was considered normal and necessary. Veterinarians have since learned more about diseases and pets' immune systems, and there is increasing evidence that immunity triggered by some vaccines provides protection beyond one year.⁵

Vaccine program goals include providing optimal immunity against clinically relevant diseases your animal is at risk to contract, while minimizing the potential for adverse events. Information about the benefits and risks of vaccination is important when making decisions about individual vaccine selection and vaccination program choices.⁶ Vaccines and tests not mentioned here are not required by Happy Tails.

- Bordetella: Bordetella (kennel cough) is a highly contagious infection that causes a dry, hacking cough and nasal discharge. It is transmitted from animal to animal by direct contact and airborne transmission, often in settings where animals come in close contact with one another such as boarding kennels. Since the vaccine is a modified live virus, it is suggested that dogs not visit for three days following administration. Vaccines are required annually.
- Fecal Exam: A negative result will confirm that your dog is free of intestinal parasites. This simple test is required annually.



- Rabies Vaccine: Rabies is transmitted when the virus is introduced into bite wounds, open cuts in skin, or onto mucous membranes. State law requires the administration of a vaccine by a licensed veterinarian. Antibody titers are not accepted as an alternative to vaccination. Annual or 3-year vaccine is required.
- Distemper, Parvovirus, Adenovirus 2 (Hepatitis), Parainfluenza: These serious diseases are transmitted from animal to animal in a variety of ways but are not a threat to humans. Studies have revealed that after the initial puppy series and 1 year booster, an animal may be protected from these diseases for up to 7 years or, in some cases, a lifetime. Protective immunity depends on many factors, including but not limited to, the type of vaccine given and the health status of the animal.⁷ You and your veterinarian should discuss which of the following options is best for your pet.
 - Option 1: 3-year vaccine (usually a combination of two or more different agents).
 - Option 2: Annual antibody titers for Distemper and Parvovirus.
- Antibody titers are measured by a simple blood test. This test determines the amount of antibody that exists from previous vaccination for distemper and parvovirus. The laboratory results indicate whether or not the level of antibody is “adequate” or “inadequate” in protecting your dog from these diseases. Studies suggest that booster vaccination is unnecessary when the antibody titer is “adequate.” Therefore, an adequate antibody titer for distemper and parvovirus means vaccination for all four diseases is not required by Happy Tails. A copy of the laboratory results must be submitted with the Happy Tails Veterinary Health Record. Titers are required annually unless the animal is re-vaccinated.
- Leptospirosis: this disease is spread through the urine of infected (often wild) animals, which can get into water or soil and survive there for weeks to months. If infection occurs, your pet may have been drinking, swimming, or walking through contaminated water.⁸ Humans can be infected by coming into contact with the urine of infected animals. There are many different strains and not all vaccines protect against all types. Vaccination depends on your dog’s risk of exposure and the prevalence and type of leptospirosis disease seen in your area; this is optional if the animal is determined to be at risk.

4 Report of the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) Canine Vaccine Task Force: 2003 Canine Vaccine Guidelines, Recommendations, and Supporting Literature.

5 American Veterinary Medical Association; What you should know about vaccination, October 2002.

6 American Veterinary Medical Association; Vaccine Policy Statement 2003.

7 Same as #3

8 Centers for Disease Control, Healthy Pets-Healthy People, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/dogs.html> 2003.



Vet Health Form - Cats

Owner Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Pet Information

Pet Name: _____

Breed(s): _____

Color(s): _____

Age: _____ Weight: _____

Sex: Male Female Altered: Yes No

Annual Requirements

FIV Test Date: _____ Result _____

Fecal Exam Date: _____ Result _____

Rabies Requirement (Select one)

3 Year Vaccination OR Annual Vaccination

Date of last vaccination: _____

Core Vaccine Requirements (Select one)

Annual antibody titers for Parvovirus and Herpesvirus/Calicivirus with adequate results. (submit a copy of lab results for each)

Date of titer: _____ Results: Adequate Inadequate

- OR -

The following 2 vaccinations at least every 3 years:

Parvovirus Date: _____

Herpes Virus/Calicivirus Date: _____

Feline Leukemia Requirement (Select one)

Annual Blood Test OR Vaccination at least every 2 years

Date of last test/vaccination: _____

Notes on Temperament

Does this pet have the temperament and health to be a good candidate for animal-assisted therapy?

Yes No

Veterinarian Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Practice Name & Address: _____

Veterinarian Signature: _____ Date: _____



Health Requirements for Cats

The following are requirements recommended by the Happy Tails Veterinary Advisory Board and approved by the Happy Tails Board of Directors. These requirements offer preventive healthcare options for your cat, while continuing to protect our clients and other Happy Tails pets. At the time of the annual exam, your veterinarian is asked to complete and sign the Happy Tails Veterinary Health Record. Receipts are NOT acceptable in lieu of the signed health form. Members are encouraged to keep a copy of the health form and laboratory tests from your veterinarian as an important cross check and reference.

Annual Examination

An annual exam is an important component of a comprehensive, individualized health care program for your cat.

Vaccinations and Tests

Vaccination needs are based on your cat's risk of exposure, its environment (potential exposure to harmful agents), age, breed, lifestyle (contact with other animals), travel habits of your cat, health status and vaccine reactions it may have experienced in the past. For many years, a set of annual vaccinations was considered normal and necessary. Veterinarians have since learned more about diseases and pets' immune systems. There is increasing evidence that immunity triggered by some vaccines provides protection beyond one year. The decision to vaccinate your cat should be based on a thorough understanding of the benefits and the risks of the procedure. For this reason, it is extremely important that you discuss the procedure with your veterinarian.¹ Vaccines and tests not mentioned here are not required by Happy Tails.

- Feline Immunodeficiency Virus: FIV infection reduces your cat's ability to fight infection. The primary mode of transmission is through bite wounds. The presence of FIV antibody in "positive" test results indicates a cat is infected with FIV, probably for its lifetime, and thus can transmit the virus to other cats. A negative test result is required by Happy Tails.
- FIV Antibody Test is required annually.
- Fecal Exam: A negative result will confirm that your cat is free of intestinal parasites. This simple test is required annually.
- Feline Leukemia: Feline leukemia virus (FeLV) is spread from cat to cat through bite wounds, through casual contact with infected cats, and from an infected mother cat to her kittens. Cats most at risk are those having some exposure to the outdoors. A blood test will reveal whether or not a cat is carrying the virus. The cat may be vaccinated after a negative blood test. Cats



infected with this virus are not accepted in Happy Tails. Happy Tails requires one of the following options:

- Option 1. Annual Blood test, (results must be negative) or
- Option 2. Vaccination every 2 years.
- Rabies Vaccine: Rabies is transmitted when the virus is introduced into bite wounds, open cuts in skin, or onto mucous membranes. State law requires the administration of a vaccine by a licensed veterinarian. Antibody titers are not accepted as an alternative to vaccination. Annual or 3-year vaccine required.
- Parvovirus (Panleukopenia), Calicivirus, Herpesvirus: These serious diseases are transmitted from animal to animal in a variety of ways, but are not a threat to humans. Recent research has provided compelling evidence to suggest that panleukopenia, herpes virus, calicivirus vaccines provide adequate protection for several years.² You and your veterinarian should discuss which of the following options is best for your pet.
 - Option 1: 3-year vaccines (2); one for herpesvirus and calicivirus and one for parvovirus/panleukopenia.(3)
 - Option 2: Antibody titers for herpesvirus, calicivirus and panleukopenia.
- Antibody titers are measured by a simple blood test. This test determines the amount of antibody that exists from previous vaccination. The laboratory results may indicate whether or not the level of antibody is “adequate” or “inadequate” in protecting your cat from these diseases. Studies suggest that booster vaccination is unnecessary when the antibody titer is “adequate.” Members choosing to titer their cats must submit a copy of the laboratory results along with the Veterinary Health Record. Titers are required annually unless the cat is vaccinated.

1 American Veterinary Medical Association; Vaccine-Associated Feline Sarcoma Task Force, <http://www.avma.org>.

2 AJVR, May 1999; JAVMA, January 1, 2002.

3 American Association of Feline Practitioners and Academy of Feline Medicine, Feline Vaccine Panel, recommended guidelines for vaccination of cats, 2000.



New Member Supporting Documents



Pet-Handler Evaluation Overview

The Happy Tails Pet Testing process combines elements of basic obedience, temperament, and stability in five stations as outlined below. Handlers should use the same type of equipment during pet evaluation as they expect to use when making visits. The following equipment may be used during the exam:

- 4 to 6 foot leash and a standard (buckle)
- Martingale collar
- Harnesses
- Use of prong collars, head halters, or retractable leashes is prohibited
- No treats are allowed during evaluation

Station 1 - Grooming/Initial Evaluation

Pets are examined for cleanliness, proper grooming, acceptable length of nails, and are assessed for any noticeable odors of the body, ears, or mouth. Equipment is checked to ensure it meets the above requirements and extra collars are removed. The examiner pets the animal and brushes their hair. The examiner assesses the pets' ability to accept a stranger who walks with a cane as well as their overall attitude toward being handled by a stranger.

Station 2 - Obedience

Handlers demonstrate loose leash walking and also allow the examiner to loose leash walk with their pets. Loose leash walking is walking in a relaxed position with the dog keeping no more than 1/2 stride ahead or 1/2 stride behind the handler, and no more than one dog's body width to the side of the handler, maintaining this position with slack in the leash. The dog may maintain this position to the right or the left side of the handler.

Dogs must be attentive to their handler's cues when walking, and should not lunge to the end of the leash. The dog must be capable of walking on a leash with its body balanced normally, standing on all four paws, and not leaning into the leash, pulling, or walking up on its hind legs.

In this Station, dogs also do a "Sit-Stay" while their handler walks 10 feet away, a "Down-Stay" while their handler walks 20 feet away, and "Come" to their handler from a distance of 20 feet. Handlers are asked to excite their dogs and then demonstrate their ability to calm them.

Station 3 - Reaction To Another Dog

A polite greeting takes place from a distance as the handler and dog team loose leash walk past an examiner and dog team as if passing in a hallway. The two teams turn around, approach head on, and exchange a hearty greeting. The dog being tested sits or stands politely beside its handler, showing only mild interest in the other dog. The dog's overall response and reaction to the situation are evaluated.



Station 4 - Crowd Scene

Pets are evaluated on their reaction to loud stimuli, converging people, and crowded areas. Pets are exposed to a wheelchair and a walker, a bell, a dropped book, and an opening umbrella.

Examiners converge on the pets, giving clumsy petting and restraining hugs and speaking in loud, animated voices. Pets are exposed to hat-wearing and to running examiners. They also walk in a tight figure eight with evaluators and other dogs.

Handlers may reassure their pets during this period. Pets are evaluated on their level of confidence and attentiveness to their handler. The dog and handler are also evaluated for their ability to work through stressful situations as a team, especially the handler's ability to help the dog recover if it does become frightened or startled. Examiners assess whether the handler exhibits the ability to read their dog's body language and empathize with what their dog experiences in this station.

Station 5 - Supervised Isolation

The handler and dog are separated for about 3 minutes of supervised isolation. The dog should display only mild stress during this time.